

MARINE NATURE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT AT THE BORDERS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Czybulka, D. (Ed.) 2012. Beiträge zum Landwirtschaftsrecht und zur Biodiversität, vol. 7. Baden-Baden, Germany: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft. 172 pp. Paperback: ISBN 978-3-8329-6351-4, US\$55.

This is a small paperback publication of contributions to a workshop held in Stralsund, Germany, in September 2010. The workshop was part of a project examining legal aspects of the ecosystem approach—to an extent attempting to define this approach. The papers within the volume are divided into parts relating to the Baltic Sea; the Atlantic Ocean off western Africa; the Black Sea; and the South Atlantic, Caribbean and Pacific Oceans. Thus, as a practising nature conservationist on the western border of the European Union (EU), I was a little puzzled by the title of the volume, as it certainly covers a few borders of the EU, but also several non-EU areas.

The Baltic Sea section has two main papers: one describes the legal framework dealing with fisheries and land-based pollution, while the other summarises the current network of marine protected areas. The latter includes a very brief summary of features of the network assessed against a set of seemingly *ad hoc* criteria. Neither paper provides great insight into the ecosystem approach.

The two African papers cover fisheries undertaken by EU vessels. The first summarises the fisheries partnership agreements between the EU and western African states, again without objective analysis of effects or consequences. The second paper describes the activities of the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO), the international body managing fisheries (except those for tuna) in the region. This is a good factual account, but again has no analysis of effectiveness.

The Black Sea section starts with a summary of the state of this sea. Not all readers will be aware that the majority of the waters of this sea (those deeper than 180 m) are anoxic. This is partly natural but

has been exacerbated by human activity. The “protection” of such a degraded body of water is not made simpler by the multiple littoral states and their differing cultures. The regional sea convention (the Bucharest convention) is not robust enough and “examples of good practice are difficult to find.” A strategic action plan has been drawn up (and is described in one paper in this section), but appears to lack in funds. One chapter describes the approach to risk management on the Romanian coast, while another describes the limited approach to Marine Protected Areas in the Sea.

The fourth part of the volume includes a description of the Cartagena Convention and legal aspects of an ecosystem approach to fisheries in the Caribbean—most of which appears to relate to the creation of marine protected areas. The obligations on EU Member States under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive are summarised. Finally, there is a short chapter on marine resource management in Indonesia.

As can be seen, this is a very mixed volume that summarises some facets of global marine management, but without any great insights or any real synthesis. I found just one mention of seabirds. The question that the volume set out to examine (what is the ecosystem approach?) is barely answered. I am not sure of the intended readership—anyone wishing to know more about any of the topics covered by these papers would surely go to much deeper resources. However, it may act as a useful signpost to those resources should you wish to use it.

Mark Tasker, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, UK
(mark.tasker@jncc.gov.uk)